

resignation of Mr. Amos, one of the representatives for the Central Ward. The polling resulted in the election of Mr. J. D. Trotter. The Board's representatives on the various educational bodies are as follows: Southland Boys' and Girls' High Schools' Board—Messrs. G. T. Stevens and J. C. Thomson; Board of Management of the Southland Technical College—Messrs. H. E. Niven, P. A. de la Perrelle, G. T. Stevens, J. C. Thomson, M.P., and A. L. Wyllie, M.A.; Gore High School Board—Messrs. D. Gilchrist, J. MacGibbon, and H. E. Niven; Training College Committee of Advice—Mr. G. T. Stevens; Otago University Council—Hon. T. MacGibbon, M.L.C.

Schools.—At the close of 1916 there were 182 schools in operation. During the year to which this report refers new schools were opened at East Limehills, Happy Valley, Etalvale (ii), Kinloch, and Glenham (sawmill). Thus at the end of 1917 there were 187 under the jurisdiction of this Board. Applications for the establishment of new schools at Pukemaori, Waiparu, Rakahouka, and Paradise (household) were dealt with during the year.

Demonstration Schools.—In view of the fact that there are in this district a large number of uncertificated teachers, many of whom have had no previous experience in the management of a school, the Board again urges upon the Minister the need for the establishment of one or two demonstration schools in this district, where the inexperienced teacher will have an opportunity of observing the work of experienced teachers. Under present conditions the necessary experience is gained mainly at the expense of the pupils.

Attendance.—The following table shows the number of schools, the number of children on the rolls, the number in average attendance, and the percentage of attendance for the past five years:—

Year.	Total Number of Schools.	Mean Average for Year.		Percentage.
		On Roll.	Attendance.	
1913	180	10,966	9,671	88.2
1914	184	11,322	10,090	89.1
1915	185	11,478	10,223	89.1
1916	182	11,668	10,457	89.6
1917	187	11,829	10,571	89.3

From the above table it will be seen that the attendance has been well maintained, although there was an abnormal amount of sickness amongst the pupils during the first six months of the year. To the Truant Officer for his untiring efforts to improve the attendance in this district credit is due. As pointed out in last year's report, a regulation of the Board requires teachers to furnish, on a form provided for the purpose, a monthly statement of the attendance at each school, together with the names of defaulters; yet the monthly report of the Truant Officer invariably contains the names of from twelve to twenty teachers who fail to comply with it. When it is remembered that this regulation was framed partly for the benefit of teachers, one cannot understand the reason for the apparent indifference to their own interests as well as the welfare of the pupils. The Truant Officer in his annual report to the Board states that he sent out 333 notices to defaulters, issued 102 summonses, and secured 64 convictions. The amount of fines inflicted was £15 12s.

Teachers.—On the 31st December, 1917, there were in the Board's service 431 teachers. The following table will show the distribution of the teaching staff in the schools under the control of the Board:—

				Male.	Female.	Total.
Head teachers	...	...	...	51	23	74
Sole teachers	...	...	...	35	76	111
Assistants	...	...	...	16	136	152
Total adult teachers				102	235	337
Pupil-teachers	...	...	...	5	33	38
Probationers	...	...	...	6	21	27
Teachers of needlework	...	...	...	...	22	22
Manual and technical teachers	...	...	...	3	4	7
Totals				116	315	431

Of the 337 adult primary-school teachers in the service of the Board 207 held teachers' certificates, five held licenses to teach, while the number of uncertificated teachers was 125. The staffing of our schools by qualified teachers, more especially in localities removed from centres of population, is becoming an increasingly difficult problem. It was anticipated that with the increased facilities for admission to training colleges the output of qualified teachers would have been augmented to such an extent as to obviate in large measure the necessity for appointing applicants with little or no previous teaching experience. This anticipation has not so far been realized in any appreciable degree. It must not be understood, however, that the Board is altogether dissatisfied with the work of its uncertificated teachers; on the contrary, the Inspectors report that some of the recently appointed uncertificated teachers give promise of becoming useful